

REMARKS

The foregoing claims include those filed on March 1, 2004, plus the correct claim identifiers for claims 16 and 17, which were inadvertently identified incorrectly on the March 1, 2004 response. The following remarks are the same as those filed on March 1, 2004.

The Examiner is thanked for the careful examination of the application and for the suggestions for amending the application. However, in view of the foregoing amendments and the remarks that follow, the Examiner is respectfully requested to enter the foregoing amendments and to withdraw the outstanding rejections.

In view of the fact that the present application is now under final rejection, a Request for Continued Examination is submitted herewith. The foregoing amendments incorporate the subject matter of claim 2 into claim 1, with a minor amendment; rewrite claim 6 in independent form; incorporate the subject matter of claim 9 into claim 8; and incorporate the subject matter of claim 15 into claim 14. As a result of such changes, claims 2, 9 and 15 are cancelled to avoid duplication. In addition, new independent claims 16 and 17 are submitted herewith.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 2-6, 9, 10 and 15 contain allowable subject matter. Accordingly, by the foregoing amendments to independent claims 1, 8 and 14, such claims are now put in condition for allowance. In addition, dependent claim 6 has also been rewritten in independent form.

The remaining rejected claims depend from either 1, 6, 8 or 14, and are thus also in condition for allowance.

To further define the protection to which Applicant is entitled, new claims 16 and 17 are submitted herewith. New claim 16 defines an image processing apparatus that includes an image processor for combining a first image and a second image, and attribute information obtaining unit for obtaining attribute information that is appended to the first image, the attribute information including suitable size information for the second image to be combined with the first image, a size information obtaining unit for obtaining original size information showing an original size of the second image, and a size adjusting unit for adjusting a size of the second image based on the suitable size information and original size information.

New claim 17 defines a corresponding method. The applied prior art does not teach or suggest such combinations. Accordingly, new claims 16 and 17 are also patentable over the applied prior art.

With regard to the objection to the specification, the Examiner alleges that the "amendment indication input receiving unit" should correspond to the "operation input unit" 105. However, the operation input unit 105 is merely a panel of control buttons and does not function as an amendment indication input receiving unit, by itself. However, the operation input unit 105 provides input to the control unit 100 which, among other functions, functions as the claimed amendment indication input receiving unit of claim 6. Applicants allege that since the operation input unit 105 is merely a panel of control buttons, the actual amendment indication input receiving unit corresponds to the control unit 100. An appropriate amendment has been made to page 22 of the specification to reflect this fact.

However, the present invention, as defined in claim 6, is not limited to the preferred illustrated embodiment set forth in control unit 100.

In the event that there are any questions concerning this response, or the application in general, the Examiner is respectfully urged to telephone the undersigned attorney so that prosecution of the application may be expedited.

Respectfully submitted,

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